



Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**  
Department of Planning and Development  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone  
(617) 796-1120  
Telefax  
(617) 796-1142  
TDD/TTY  
(617) 796-1089  
www.newtonma.gov

Candace Havens  
Director

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**INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE**

**DATE:** November 4, 2011

**TO:** John Lojek, Commissioner of Inspectional Services

**FROM:** Candace Havens, Director Planning and Development  
Eve Tapper, Chief Planner for Current Planning <sup>ET</sup>  
Derek Valentine, Senior Planner

**SUBJECT:** **Administrative Site Plan Review – Sec. 30-5(a)(2)**  
**Lasell College, Relocation and replacement of a scoreboard.**

**CC:** Mayor Setti D. Warren  
Ward 4 Alderman Jay W. Harney  
Alderman at Large Leonard J. Gentile  
Alderman at Large Amy Mah Sangiolo

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In accordance with Section 30-5(a)(2) of the City's Zoning Ordinance, which requires Site Plan Review for nonprofit educational uses, the Planning Department and other city departments have reviewed the proposed plans for the LASELL COLLEGE, PROPOSED SCOREBOARD REPLACEMENT, submitted to the City of Newton on September 8, 2011. The site of the proposed scoreboard is at the northeast corner of the baseball field, in left field. It will be located behind 19 Berkeley Place, also known as Mott House Dormitory.

**Background**

Lasell College, a nonprofit educational institution in Auburndale has operated at this locus for approximately 150 years and has expanded its facilities over time. This proposed scoreboard is the latest in a series of renovations and new buildings on the campus. Most recently, the College completed the Administrative Review Process for additional assisted living space at Lasell Village, and the renovation of Hamel House, home to the College's Admissions Office. The Planning Department is currently reviewing a proposal to convert an existing tennis court into a parking lot on Maple Terrace.

**Project Overview**

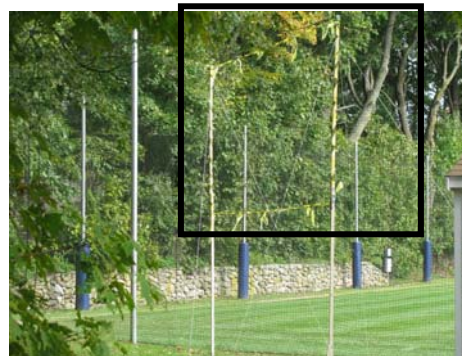
The parcel where the scoreboard is currently located is 183,425 square feet. This site is improved with a multi-use baseball/soccer field and a college building known as "the Barn"

which is behind home plate. The existing scoreboard is located to the east of the Barn. The proposal is to remove this scoreboard and place a new 7 foot x 14 foot scoreboard at 19 Berkeley Place, a site immediately adjacent to the current site, behind Mott House dormitory. The scoreboard will be located 19.5 feet from the rear property line and will be more visible from adjacent residential properties than the existing scoreboard; particularly the residences on the south side of Central Street, bordering the Lasell Campus. The required rear setback for a Multi-Use Institution in the Single Residence 2 zone is 30 feet. If the College would like to locate the scoreboard where it is presently proposed, they will need to seek a variance or a Dover Waiver from the Commissioner of Inspectional Services. The Planning Department does not recommend a Dover Waiver for this requirement because it would be in conflict with the intent of that dimensional requirement. We believe that there are other viable alternatives for the relocation of the scoreboard on College-owned property that would have less impact on the neighborhood.

At the neighborhood meeting held on October 4, 2011, neighbors expressed concerns with the new location of the scoreboard and how it might impact nearby residential properties. The impacts will be aesthetic as well as audible since a bullhorn/PA system will be incorporated into the scoreboard. Those in attendance at the community meeting requested that a mock up of the sign be provided prior to its installation. Below are pictures showing the mock up installed by the College, as viewed on October 18, 2011.



View from the south side



View from the north side

The Planning Department notes that there is significant screening along the north property line, including dense evergreens and stockade fencing. However, the impact of the scoreboard can be further mitigated by painting the back of the scoreboard black in combination with additional plantings. The College has agreed to paint the back of the scoreboard and to plant 10 foot to 12 foot arborvitae behind it.

Although the Planning Department believes that this combination will provide some mitigation for the surrounding neighborhood, the Department recommends that the College explore alternative locations for the scoreboard. Locations that will maintain the rear setback requirement are preferred.

Residents were also concerned that the scoreboard may be a target for vandals. The College should commit to a maintenance schedule for the scoreboard in the event that vandalism occurs.

### **Technical Considerations**

In accordance with Section 30-5 of the City's Zoning Ordinance, the plans are to be reviewed for compliance with the dimensional standards laid out in Section 30-15 Table 2 for a Multi-Use Institution. In addition, the Director of Planning and Development may consider the application in light of the *Site Plan Review Criteria* listed in Section 30-5(2)(c).

The proposed site of the scoreboard is a 10,421 square foot lot. Since the proposed scoreboard has a minimal footprint; open space, lot coverage, and FAR are not substantially affected by this project. The only substantive change proposed is with respect to the rear lot line setback. The proposed scoreboard would be located 19.5 feet from the rear property line at 19 Berkeley Place, where a 30 foot setback is required.

### **II. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 30-19**

The proposal does not require any additional parking or any changes to the existing parking facilities at the College.

### **III. AUBURNDALE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

The Auburndale Historic District Commission reviewed the proposal for the new scoreboard at their regular meeting on August 9, 2011 and determined that installation is appropriate given the limited visibility from public ways. If the College decides to change the proposed location, a new application must be filed with the Auburndale Historic District Commission.

### **IV. SITE PLAN REVIEW CRITERIA**

As per Section 30-5 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Director of Planning and Development may consider this project in light of the following criteria:

#### **1. Convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement within the site and in relation to the adjacent streets, properties or improvements**

No changes are proposed to the vehicular or pedestrian circulation on site.

#### **2. Provision of off-street loading incidental to the servicing of the building**

No loading area was specified on the plans and none is required under 30-19 (I).

### 3. Screening of parking areas and structures

No screening is shown on the site plan. However, in response to concerns from residential neighbors, the College has agreed to locate 10-14 foot (at planting) evergreen shrubs on north side of the proposed scoreboard to minimize the impact on the residential viewshed.

### 4. Provision of Utilities, adequacy for the methods for disposal of sewage, refuse and waste, and location of utility service lines underground

A lighting source for the scoreboard is not indicated on the plans. If the College is proposing any lighting, it should be shown on the plans. The applicant should also ensure that lighting, if provided, will not spill beyond the boundaries of the site to affect the adjacent residential neighborhood.

### 5. Site and relationship to nearby structures

The site is within the Lasell campus, but is close to residential abutters. Private residences that abut the subject site include 36, 42, 46, 52, and 58 Central Street. To the west of the proposed site of the scoreboard are other buildings owned by the College. The proposed scoreboard would be located 19.5 feet from residential abutters. The Planning Department is concerned about the impact that audio systems associated with the scoreboard will have on residential abutters, given their close proximity.

### 6. Avoidance of Topographical Changes

No major grading is required as part of this installation.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS**

Prior to the issuance of a building permit, Lasell College should be expected to complete the following:

- ***Obtain a Dover waiver for the rear setback by demonstrating to the Commissioner of Inspectional Services that alternative locations for the scoreboard have been explored, and that the proposed site can meet the needs of the College without adversely affecting the neighbors.***
- ***The applicant should indicate on the plans what color the north side of the scoreboard will be painted.***
- ***The applicant should provide evergreen landscape screening on the north side of the scoreboard to shield it from view of adjacent residences.***
- ***The applicant should detail any lighting proposed for the scoreboard and clarify that any lighting will not leave the site.***

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A: Land Use Map

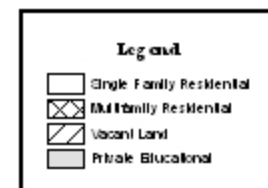
Attachment B: Zoning Map

**MATERIALS REVIEWED:**

- *“Lasell Scoreboard Elevation View and Foundation Plan View”, Cornerstone Engineering, INC, 7/29/1, signed and stamped by James Wright JR., Professional Engineer.*
- *“Topographic Site Plan Showing Proposed Scoreboard at Berkeley Place”, VTP Associates, August 31, 2011, signed and stamped by Joseph R. Porter, Professional Land Surveyor.*

# 19 Berkeley Place Land Use

*City of Newton,  
Massachusetts*



The information on this map is from the Newton Geographic Information System (GIS). The City of Newton cannot guarantee the accuracy of this information. Each user of this map is responsible for determining its suitability for his or her intended purpose. City departments will not necessarily approve applications based solely on GIS data.

**CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS**  
 Mayor - Seth D. Warren  
 GIS Administrator - Douglas Greenfield

0 12.5 25 50 75 100  
 Feet

ATTACHMENT A

Map Date: October 20, 2011



# 19 Berkeley Place Zoning

*City of Newton,  
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0 12.5 25 50 75 100 Feet

ATTACHMENT B

Map Date: October 20, 2011